



4th August 2021

Hello again, friends of the Save New Barnet Campaign.

This newsletter is dominated by one major planning application, and we need you to do your bit once again. Please make your voice heard by registering your views on Barnet Council's planning website.

### **Victoria Quarter (Gasworks Site) Planning Application**

Fairview New Homes and One Housing have submitted a planning application as follows:

Reference: *21/3676/FUL*

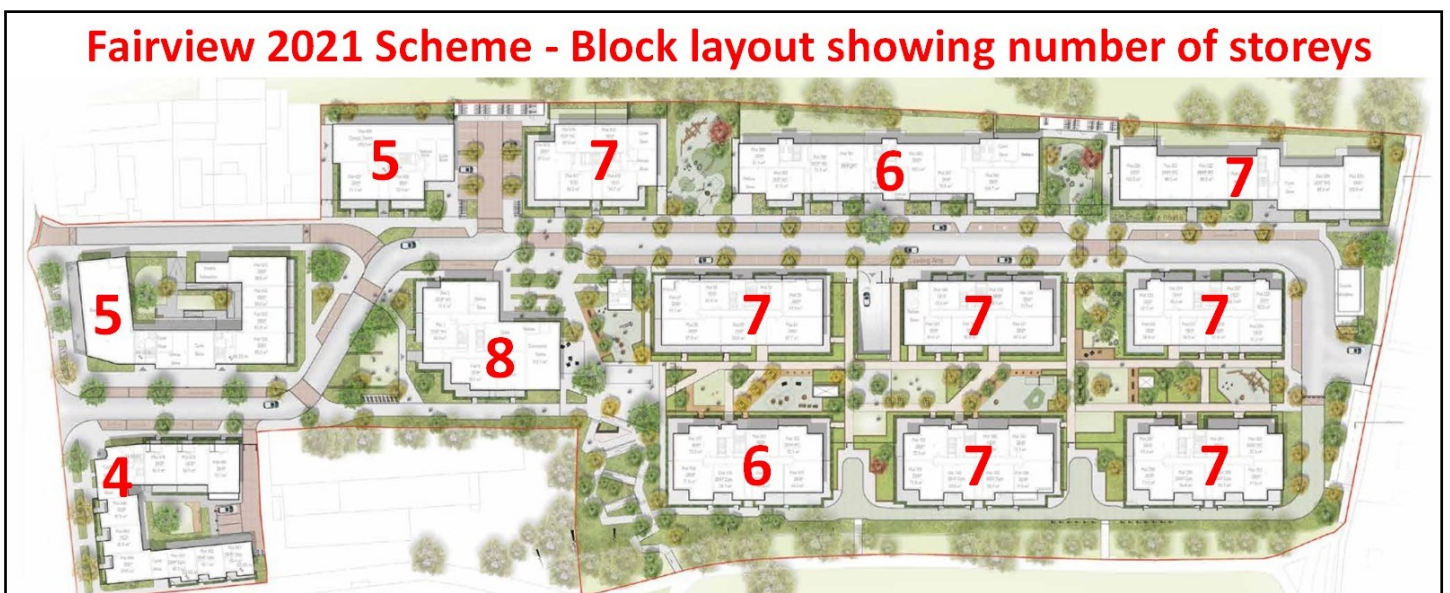
Location: *Land Formerly Known As British Gas Works Albert Road New Barnet Barnet EN4 9SH*

Proposal: *Redevelopment of the site to provide 544 residential units (Use Class C3) within 13 buildings ranging from 4 to 8 storeys, with 267.1sqm of retail/commercial space and 112.7sqm of community space (Use Class E and F) at ground floor, new public realm with communal landscaped amenity areas, alterations and additions to existing highways arrangements plus the removal of existing elevated footbridge and creation of new pedestrian routes, 334 car parking spaces (including car club and accessible provision) with basement and surface level provision, secure cycle parking, servicing and other associated development.*

**The deadline for public comments to Barnet Council is Wednesday 1st September 2021.**

The following link will take you direct to the planning application (21/3676/FUL) on Barnet Council's website:  
<https://tinyurl.com/vqjuly2021>

The planning application was submitted to the council's planners immediately after Fairview & One Housing closed their second public consultation exercise at the end of June 2021. The layout of the scheme remains



continues overleaf...

very similar to the previous application that was unanimously refused by Barnet Councillors at their planning committee in September 2020. The number of homes has been reduced by 98, but this remains a very large development designed to house a maximum of 1814 residents.

A reminder that One Housing still hold a valid planning permission from 2017 to build a large but well designed mixed development of 371 homes. Instead, in conjunction with Fairview, they continue to push for much denser and visually obtrusive schemes packed with tiny flats.

<b>Consented 2017 One Housing Scheme</b>	<b>Refused 2020 Fairview &amp; One Housing Scheme</b>	<b>Current 2021 application from Fairview &amp; One Housing</b>
371 homes	652 homes	554 homes
Mews houses (2 storey) Town houses (3 storey) Flats (4 to 6 storey, and one 8 storey block)	Flats only (blocks up to 10 storeys)	Flats only (blocks up to 8 storeys)
1 bed units - 84 2 bed units - 174 3 bed units - 83 4 bed units - 30	1 bed flats - 220 2 bed flats - 310 3 bed flats - 122	Studio flats - 29 1 bed flats - 159 2 bed flats - 237 3 bed flats - 103 4 bed flats - 16
396 car parking spaces	392 car parking spaces	334 car parking spaces

### Reasons to Object

Listed below are six reasons to object to this latest Victoria Quarter planning application:

- Not enough family housing and too many studio, one and two bed flats.
- Too many tall blocks that don't reflect the local area.
- The scheme is too dense for the local environment.
- The scheme represents poor quality design.
- Inadequate parking provision.
- Failure to adequately consult.

Specific details for each of these points are set out later in this newsletter. Please feel free to pick out the elements that you feel need to be brought to the planning officer's attention.

### How To Respond

Full details of the application, plans, documents and public comments are all available to read online.

Direct link: <https://tinyurl.com/vqjuly2021>

Or manually via [www.barnet.gov.uk](http://www.barnet.gov.uk) and in sequence select 'Planning and building', 'View or comment on a planning application', 'Basic search', then enter **21/3676/FUL** in the search box at the bottom of the page.

The deadline for public comments is Wednesday 1st September 2021.

Barnet Council would prefer you to enter your comments online at their planning website. Alternatively you can email or post your comments to the planning department, to arrive before the deadline.

Email: [planning.consultation@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:planning.consultation@barnet.gov.uk)

Post: Planning and Building Control, 2 Bristol Avenue, Colindale, London, NW9 4EW

It is essential that you clearly state reference number **21/3676/FUL** and include your full name and address when responding by either email or post. Comments submitted this way may also be uploaded to the publicly viewable website.

Note that the website limits responses to 2000 characters. If you want to write more, you can add additional responses, starting each with 'Continued'. We would advise composing submissions offline in your regular word processor, before copying and pasting your text into the planning website. It has a habit of timing out after 10-15 minutes and thus losing your comments before you have had a chance to complete.

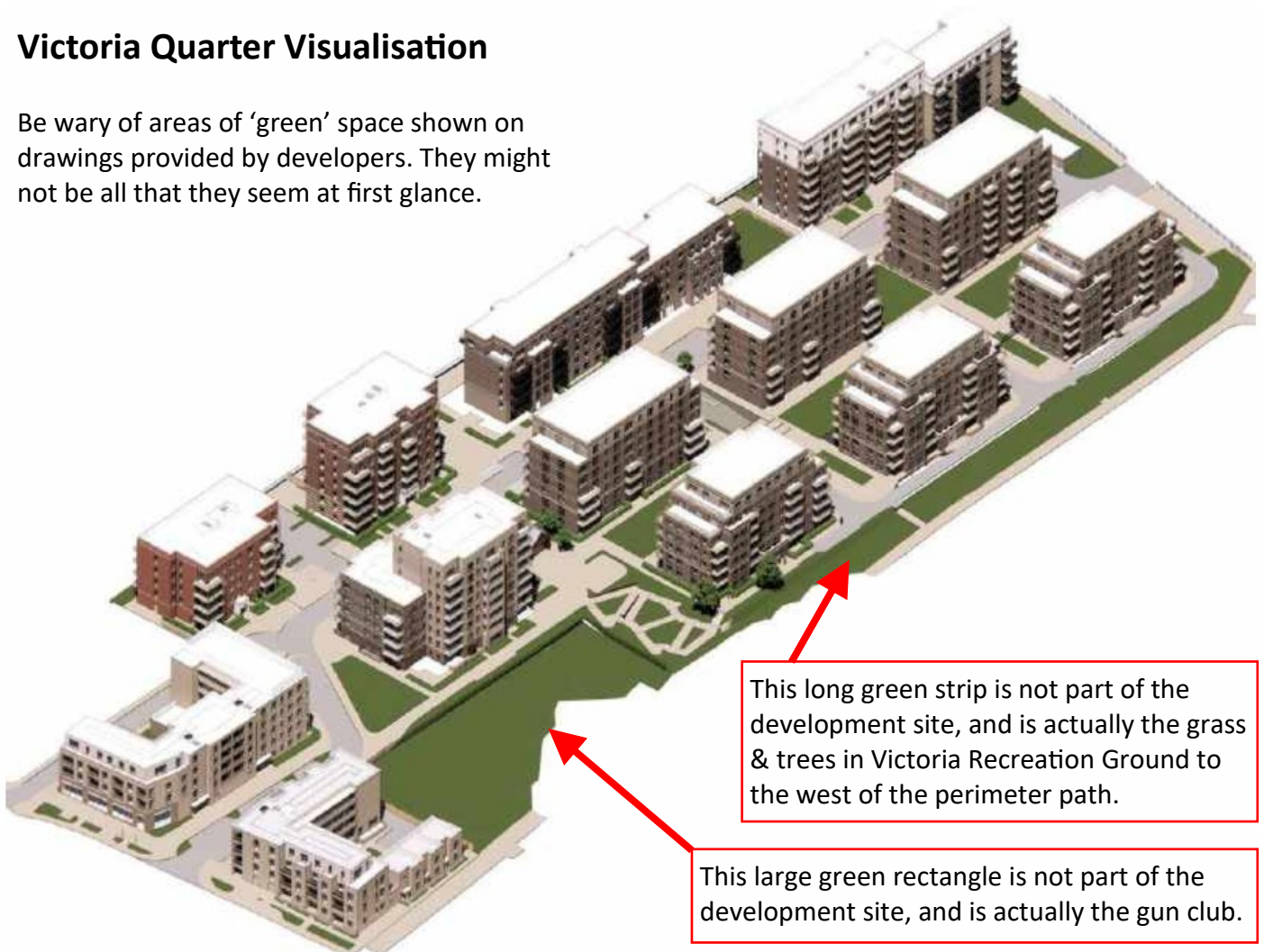
For greatest effect, your comment should be in your own words. **Please don't just copy and paste chunks of text from this newsletter.** Write what matters most to you. If this is only a few words, that's absolutely fine. If you can write a more detailed response, then please do. Not everyone has the same technical background in planning issues, but **EVERY** local resident's voice should be heard. If there are additional people in your household they can each submit their own response as every person's input counts separately.

If you have the time and inclination, we would encourage you to look through the documents that the developers have submitted. A starting point is the 'Design And Access Statement' which outlines all aspects of the scheme. There are also some artists impressions 'Victoria Quarter Visuals' which give a rose tinted vision of how the developer think their completed project will look.

For a reminder of how the plans for the gasworks site have developed over the years, please read our previous newsletters which are all still available at [www.newbarnet.org.uk](http://www.newbarnet.org.uk)

## Victoria Quarter Visualisation

Be wary of areas of 'green' space shown on drawings provided by developers. They might not be all that they seem at first glance.



## Detailed Reasons To Object

Specific details of our six reasons to object are set out below.

**Not enough family housing of 3+ beds and too many studio, one and two bed flats** which breaches Planning Policy DM08 and Draft Local Plan Policy HOU02 Housing Mix. Barnet has identified the priority for three bed homes but in this proposal they make up just 19% of the properties. In this scheme there are 29 studio flats for 1 person and 92, 2 bed 3 person flats with many of the flats built to the absolute minimum size requirement.

**Too many tall blocks that don't reflect the local area.** Although there is now just one "Tall building" classified as 8 storeys or more, seven of the blocks are 7 storeys tall. Blocks facing the park are 7 storeys. The London Plan states that "Based on local context, Development Plans should define what is considered a tall building for specific localities, the height of which will vary between and within different parts of London but should not be less than 6 storeys or 18 metres measured from ground to the floor level of the uppermost storey". Given that the vast majority of buildings in East Barnet Ward are between 2 and 4 storeys, the 7 storey buildings do not reflect the local context. In addition, The London Plan states that, "This does not mean that all buildings up to this height are automatically acceptable, such proposals will still need to be assessed in the context of other planning policies". This should be grounds for refusal.

**The scheme is too dense for the local environment.** The scheme that received planning consent in 2017 has a housing density of 386 habitable rooms per hectare (hr/ha). The new scheme has increased this density to 527 hr/ha. The London Plan guidance is very clear that for suburban environments like New Barnet, with a PTAL score of 1-3 the density should be in the range 150-250 hr/ha. Even if New Barnet were considered an urban environment the density guideline is still only 200-450 hr/ha. The density the developer proposes is towards the top end for Central sites which is 300-650hr/ha. For reference, the London Plan defines Central Areas as: "areas with very dense development, a mix of different uses, large building footprints and typically buildings of four to six storeys, located within 800 metres walking distance of an International, Metropolitan or Major town centre" which is not a true or accurate representation of New Barnet. This demonstrates that the density of the proposed scheme is in breach of guidelines and represents over development. It breaches current Planning Policy DM02, Draft London Plan Policy D6 and Draft Local Plan Policy CDH01 which seeks to optimise housing density rather than maximise housing density.

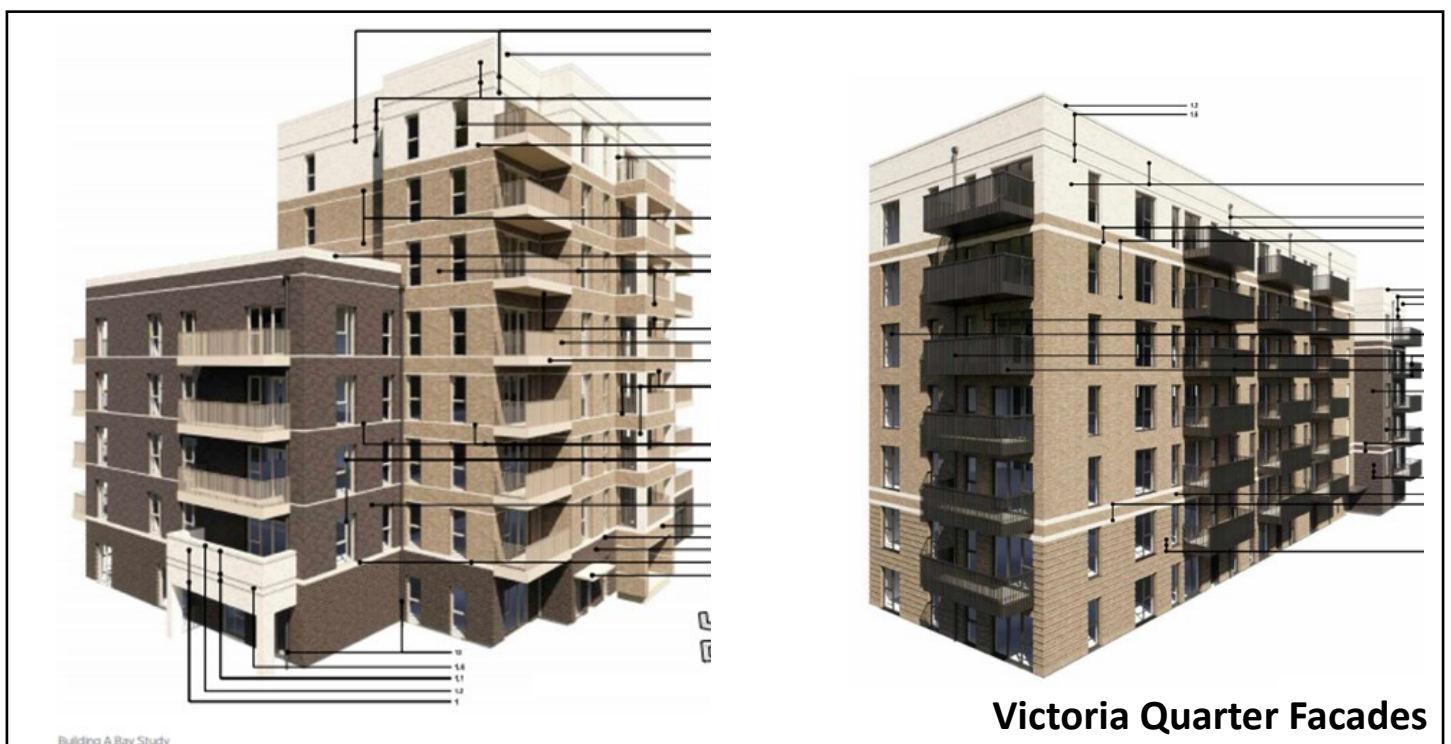
**The scheme is of poor quality design.** National, London and Barnet planning guidelines all state that design should be of a good quality and this is set down in a range of planning policies including National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Section 12, London Plan (2021) Policy D6 and Barnet Policy CS5, DM01 & DM05. Given the scheme has not changed significantly from the previous submission other than a slight reduction on height and the removal of some bolt on blocks the reason for objection are very similar as follows:

- Monolithic, rectilinear massing of high rise blocks.
- Uniform and repetitive building typologies.
- Aerial views highlight the utilitarian uniformity of the blocks.
- Flat facades create a 'wall' of building with little visual relief which dominates and overshadows surrounding open spaces.
- A generic grid overlaid on the site, resulting in uniform footprints and massing and repetitive building typologies and a lack of visual amenity.
- Seven storey blocks are orientated with the longer elevation addressing the park, creating a wall of high rise building which dominates the park.
- Generic approach and lack of visual amenity.
- Flats with habitable rooms directly facing the railway will become overheated due to their West facing aspect and their inability to open windows due to the rail noise.
- Seven storey buildings either side of the new spine road has created a 'noise canyon', with noise pollution levels that are severe enough to require mitigating.

Even the GLA planners noted the design issues we have raised and stated that “Officers requested that alternative layouts and typologies be explored to find an optimal design solution for the site” and that “The proposal has a potential to deliver further improvements in terms of urban design and site layout and therefore, alternative architectural typologies and public realm improvements should be further explored. In particular, the introduction of mews type buildings should be considered to define courtyard buildings/amenity spaces”. The developer’s response was to disagree with the GLA and ignore their recommendations.

**Inadequate parking provision.** The planning application states within the Design & Access Statement that the site benefits from good transport connectivity. However, 40% of the units sit in part of the site that has a PTAL rating of 1a, which indicates poor transport connectivity and is not surprising given the rear of the site is approximately 400m from the Green Belt. In the two previous schemes (2017 and 2020) there were approximately 390 parking spaces provided yet in the latest proposal this has been reduced to 334 parking spaces or just 0.6 parking spaces per home. The developer appears to have used 45 of the basement parking spaces shown on the 2020 scheme for bin stores and cycle spaces freeing up space for more flats at ground level. While housing in inner London may have much lower parking requirements, the Secretary of State specifically required higher parking standard in the London Plan stating “the approach to lower PTAL Outer London areas has been made more flexible and parking requirements for family housing in Outer London have been differentiated. Reducing parking spaces for homes risks residents being forced to park on street and causing congestion to London’s road network and adversely impacting on the cyclability of roads in outer London”. As such reducing the number of parking spaces to 334 seems to directly conflict with what the Secretary of State was aiming to achieve and should be grounds for refusal.

**Failure to adequately consult.** The local community has tried to work with the developers but have been treated with contempt. At the first public consultation, a single one hour webinar provided no plans, drawings or images of what they were proposing even though on the same day they had made a detailed presentation to Barnet planning officers. Save New Barnet team worked up a scheme, based on the consented 2017 scheme which was presented to the developers in May, but all of these ideas were rejected. In the second public webinar which took place just 9 days before the developer submitted their application it was clear that they had no intention of listening to the community. The NPPF is clear when it states that, “Early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties. Good quality pre-application discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community”. The developer has not met this requirement.



## Elected Representatives

Once you have submitted your response to the planning department, you may also wish to contact your local elected representatives to let them know your views on this proposed development.

MP for Chipping Barnet	Theresa Villiers	theresa@theresavilliers.co.uk
GLA member for Barnet & Camden	Anne Clarke	anne.clarke@london.gov.uk
East Barnet Ward Councillors	Cllr Felix Byers Cllr Nicole Richer Cllr Laurie Williams	cllr.f.byers@barnet.gov.uk cllr.n.richer@barnet.gov.uk cllr.l.williams@barnet.gov.uk
High Barnet Ward Councillors	Cllr David Longstaff Cllr Wendy Prentice Cllr Julian Teare	cllr.d.longstaff@barnet.gov.uk cllr.w.prentice@barnet.gov.uk cllr.j.teare@barnet.gov.uk
Oakleigh Ward Councillors	Cllr Sachin Rajput Cllr Thomas Smith Cllr Stephen Sowerby	cllr.s.rajput@barnet.gov.uk cllr.t.smith@barnet.gov.uk cllr.s.sowerby@barnet.gov.uk

## Newsletter

Please pass copies of this newsletter on to your neighbours and friends to ensure that everyone in the area is aware of the planning application and how we can all make our voices heard where it counts.

Regards,  
Save New Barnet Campaign Team



# Save New Barnet

## Save New Barnet Campaign

c/o The Community Centre, 48/50 Victoria Road, New Barnet, Herts EN4 9PF

 [www.facebook.com/groups/18590613740](http://www.facebook.com/groups/18590613740)

 [www.twitter.com/NewBarnet](http://www.twitter.com/NewBarnet)

**E** [info@newbarnet.org.uk](mailto:info@newbarnet.org.uk)

**W** [www.newbarnet.org.uk](http://www.newbarnet.org.uk)

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*Save New Barnet Campaign is a non-political group of local residents fighting for a better New Barnet. The group seeks to inform the local community about potential changes to the area, and oppose inappropriate developments. The group aims to promote a clear vision for how New Barnet could be developed for the benefit of the community based on the views of local people. The campaign is funded entirely by donations from individuals. It is not bankrolled by any company or commercial organisation.*

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